Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

January 5, 2025
Epiphany



Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

SERVICE OF WORSHIP
2nd Sunday of Christmas
January 5, 2025 11:00 AM

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP/CALL TO LIFE** from Psalm 18:24

This is the year that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

***HYMN 121** "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
ST. LOUIS

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all on earth.

3 How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us; abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

***A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING AND CONFESSION**

Almighty God, another year has passed.
For the times we experienced your mercy, we give you thanks.
(Silent Reflection)
For the times we did not acknowledge your grace, we ask your forgiveness.
(Silent Reflection)
For the times we took bold steps of faith, we give you thanks.
(Silent Reflection)
For the times we ignored your calling in our lives, we ask your forgiveness.
(Silent Reflection)
For the times we learned more about you, we give you thanks.
(Silent Reflection)
For the times we were too proud, rather than humbled, to see you at work around us and in us, we ask your forgiveness.
(Silent Reflection)
Merciful God, guide us in this new year, help us to see you more clearly than ever before. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

…in the name of Jesus, the resurrection and the life, let us declare:

Our stories are known; our sins are forgiven; our work has just begun.

***RESPONSE (SUNG)** Hymn 119 Verse 3

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings,
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US AND RECEIVING STAR WORDS FOR 2025

Children and youth are invited to come forward.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING John 1:1-14

ANTHEM **"**Word of God Come Down On Earth"
Arr. John Ferguson

Word of God, come down on earth, Living rain from heaven descending;
Touch our hearts and bring to birth Faith and hope and love unending.
Word almighty, we revere you; Word made flesh, we long to hear you.

Word eternal, throned on high, Word that brought to life creation,
Word that came from heaven to die, Crucified for our salvation,
Saving Word, the world restoring, Speak to us, your love outpouring.

Word that speaks God's tender love, One with God beyond all telling,
Word that sends us from above, God the Spirit, with us dwelling.
Word of truth, to all truth lead us, Word of life, with one Bread feed us.

SECOND READING Matthew 2:1-12

SERMON Rev. Dr. Laurie Furr-Vancini
"Shifting Our Focus"

***A LITANY OF OFFERING OURSELVES FOR 2025**

Sally Broughton, Clerk of Session: Love has indeed come today, as sure as many years ago. We want to be wise people in 2025. We are rooted in history, but open to the newness. We are storm-tossed, yet hopeful enough to begin anew. Here in this place, we welcome Laurie to guide us through the path set before us.

Laurie: Beginning again, I seek to serve God and serve you as Transitional Pastor at Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, offering of myself for this new year. You, also, are asked to offer yourself to this time and this place: this church, this community, this political terrain of our country. We offer ourselves, together, in and to God's world.

All: We will worship together. We will serve side by side. We will make lovely and difficult decisions. Will will notice and name those on the margins and those with no voice. We will celebrate and we will struggle. We will seek to be faithful in this time and place. We will laugh and cry, side by side. We seek to be faithful. It is a new year.

***RESPONSE** from *Light Dawns on a Weary World*
#79 vs. 2

Love grows in in a weary world when hungry hearts find bread and children's dreams are fed.
Love grows in a weary world: the promised feast of plenty comes.
The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing.
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Words of Institution
Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer
Invitation, Sharing the Bread and the Cup
Prayer

The bread is gluten-free; the juice is not fermented, with the hope that all may freely participate.

***HYMN 744** "Arise, Your Light Is Come!"
FESTAL SONG

1 Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.

2 Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captives' liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

3 Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

4 Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

*Please stand as you are able

CHURCH STAFF

Laurie Furr-Vancini, Transitional Pastor
Ted Stewart, Interim Director of Music
Andrew Tripp, Church Administrator
Leslie Sayyar, Brent Roberts; Treasurers
Barbara Escalante, Bookkeeper

Elder of the Day: Don Collins
Coffee Hour Host: Vicki Collins

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT EDUCATION CLASS We will resume this coming **Sunday, January 5 at 9:30 in the Adult Ed room**. The book that we will be focusing on for the next 6 weeks is John Pavlovitz's Worth Fighting For: Finding Courage & Compassion When Cruelty is Trending. This book seems particularly relevant in these days in which we are living. Contact Beth Meriwether (828-777-2867) with any questions. All are welcome.

COMMUNITY JOYS AND CONCERNS: If you would like to add or update a prayer request, please contact the church office.

We celebrate: New member Dennis Riley, and his wife, Cindy, who is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church ◦ encouraging results in **Jon Hettrick's** most recent round of medical tests

We remember in prayer: The family of **Jack and Sue Alllison,** on the death of **Jack's brother Robin.**◦ The family of **Thurman Slone**, **Joyce Cucinella's brother,** following his death on December 22 ◦ The family of **Margaret (Judy) Laney, John's sister,** following her death on December 15 ◦ The family of **Carol Lee Joslin, Blake Joslin's mother**, following her death on December 10 ◦ **Salyna Morgan,** recovering from surgery for a broken arm ◦ **Dina Taylor, Barbara Escalante's sister,** recovering from surgery in California on December 2, for a brain bleed. ◦ **Wynee Bullerdick, daughter of Rodney and Sharon Lytle** as she collaborates with her doctor to determine the cause of her illness. ◦ all who continue to be affected by loss caused by recent storms. In our congregation, we remember especially **Andrew Tripp, Cindy and Dennis Riley, Jackie Wintle, Joyce Cucinella,** and **Bob, the father of Natalie's partner Jeff** ◦ **Donna Eagle Joslin,** healing from wrist surgery. ◦ **Amanda Branscombe,** as she continues to recover from spinal fusion surgery ◦ **Bill Christy,** as he continues to heal following a heart transplant ◦ **Susan Laney**, receiving therapy at home ◦ **Bubba Lytle, Rodney and Sharon's son**, making excellent progress recovering from a serious motorcycle accident ◦ **Jackie Ligon Cole** ◦ **Pat Crumpler** ◦ **Martha Dugger** ◦ **Rick Garrison** ◦ **Houston Huggins** (**Beth Meriwether's brother**) ◦ **Erika Lytle** ◦ **Fran Roberts' sister-in-law, Linda Briggs** ◦ **Jon Hettrick and his family** ◦ **Marjorie Hettrick** ◦ **Shane Reece** (**Nancy Garrison's son**) ◦ **Pat Wilson's son, Kell**

HABITAT VOLUNTEER DAYS IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH Faith partner volunteers, including 10 from our church, made great progress helping Habitat build new affordable homes in Arden last fall, and there is a new opportunity for volunteers to help from February 4-March 22. We have spaces reserved on the volunteer schedule for Fridays Feb 14 and March 7, and Saturdays Feb. 15 and March 8, and many other dates are available. No special skills or tools are needed, only a willingness to help. If you have questions about this important mission project, contact Larry Griswold (larrygris@gmail.com).

TOGATHER Beginning on Tuesday, January 14 we will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month through May at 1:30 PM in the chapel parlor. Please know that all are welcome and there are no expectations. This is a time to build and strengthen relationships, spend some time in quiet reflection and prayer, learn and practice calming and relaxation skills, and share resources. January would be a great time to begin. Contact Beth Meriwether (828-777-2867) for information.

BOOK GROUP The Warren Wilson Book Group will hold its first meeting of 2024 at noon on January 9 in the Church Parlor. Bring your lunch and enjoy some fellowship from 12-12:30. At 12:30 Carolyn will lead our discussion of ***Yankee Stranger*** by Elswyth Thane. So if one of your resolutions is to read more in 2025 please join us! New members are always welcome.

HURRICANE RELIEF Session has set up a **fund to provide aid to neighbors most affected by Hurricane Helene**. There are handouts in the narthex explaining these giving opportunities.

Setting Our Intentions for 2025:

What is God calling you to leave behind from 2024?

Is there a different road where the Spirit might be leading you in 2025?

What are your first impressions of your star word that chose you for 2025.

You may want your star word that help you focus of what God already has in store for you this year. Another word may be calling to you for the year. What is that word? What is that word saying to you. Keep both words in your imagination as you set out in to 2025.

What other intentions do you have for 2025 which will help you love God, love self, love neighbor?

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Warren Wilson
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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At Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church we are mothers and fathers, single and married, gay and straight, young and old, black and white, prosperous and poor, uncertain and sure, broken and whole – and everything in between. Together we are the many faces of humanity, yet as a joyful, caring, and loving community of faith, we are one in Christ!